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# Hagrom Verses

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Edward N. Teall



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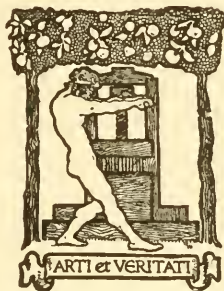




# VAGROM VERSES

BY

EDWARD N. TEALL



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Ms. A. 11.2.14  
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TO MY MOTHER

*a critic*

*not grudging of praise*



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## VAGROM VERSES



## THE WAYFARER

### I

Travelling the dusty road—  
Merrily I went—  
I mind me well how it befell  
I heard one lament:  
A Pilgrim weary 'neath the load  
Of years, gray and bent.

"Greeting, sir," I cheerly cried,  
"In God's good grace!"  
Sadly then the Pilgrim sighed—  
Woeful his face,  
Woeful his tones—replied,  
Slow, like his pace:

"Good young sir, I greatly fear"—  
Shaking his head—  
"Empty is song, the world's a-wrong,  
True faith is dead.  
Nor lives religion long,"  
Sadly he said.

" 'Tis a degenerate day,"  
Mournful he mused;  
"And to the days of old as dross to purest gold,  
Things are not as they used,  
Mankind is gone astray;  
Once, truly, *I* enthused—  
Now for the world I pray.  
Ah, me, the weary way!"

Then, taking up his staff,  
A tear in his eye:  
"Farewell," he said; "God's wheaten bread  
Be yours, not this world's chaff!"  
"Farewell," said I—

Oh, how the wide fields laugh  
Under the sky!

## II

Travelling the dusty road—  
Thoughtfully I went—  
I mind me well it then befell  
I heard one lament:  
A Pilgrim young who forward strode,  
On the goal intent.

"I pray you but a moment, friend,"  
I cried, "to pause."  
"Time is flying," he replying.  
"Whither doth your effort tend?  
This haste—the cause?"  
"Crowning at the journey's end!  
Yet, nearer as I wend,  
The goal withdraws."

"Nay, speak less darkly, please,"  
I dared to ask;  
"Friend of the way, more plainly say  
What gainful things are these,  
Yonside the task?"  
"Fortune, nor fame, nor ease—  
Knowledge of mysteries  
Under the mask!"

"Success," I wished. He flung  
Crisp "Farewell" to me. Tell me: of us three—  
Pilgrim old and Pilgrim young  
And Wayfarer free—  
As you have heard them sung,  
Which would you be?



## THE CRISIS

I wonder: When will it come,  
That moment of uttermost test  
When the naked soul is confessed?  
Will it come when the drum and the bugle wide  
Summon the nations of earth to ride  
Like Vikings of eld on a turbulent tide  
On the war wave's red spumed crest?

I wonder: When will it come,  
That soul searching moment, to me—  
And where, on the land or the sea?  
Will the heart be dumb and the hand be numb,  
Or the spirit stout when it takes the list  
For the fateful course of the battle tryst  
From the first ordained to be?

I wonder: When will it come,  
That sudden unsealing of sight—  
In the day or the terrible night?  
Whatever the time, wherever the place,  
Forfend, ye fates, that there be disgrace  
When I and my self stand face to face  
Each asking: Who is this wight?

Then, courage! Whenever it come,  
'Mid the hum of the lethal ball  
On the field where the stricken fall—  
In the foul arena's stifling dust,  
Stained with the red wine of battle lust—  
Let it come when it will, as come it must;  
Courage to answer the call!

Then, wisdom! Whenever it come,  
The moment of critical choice  
When the calm, imperative voice  
Bids behold the divergent ways of life,  
With unknown possibilities rife,

And choose; then wisdom be mine to plumb  
The mystery, and rejoice.

I wonder: When will it come,  
That glorious moment, to me—  
And what shall the issue be?  
Each passing moment the future unlocks;  
Whose faith is fast as the continent rocks,  
He dreadeth not fate and its rudest shocks—  
From defeat wrests victory!

### THE JAILER

Brusque January, warder of the hills,  
Proclaims with windy fanfare empery  
And sends his minions forth with lock and key,  
To make all fast. They seal the gelid rills,  
The frozen boles that no sap, rising, thrills—  
Bind fast the fallow fields, with eery glee,  
Clog up the busy town's machinery  
And wreak upon a weary world their wills.

Too sanguine January! They are frail,  
These rough wrought gyves of thine; and there  
is one  
Shall bring deliverance to the captive earth—  
For there will come a time of breaking jail,  
When streams leap forth and fields drink in the  
sun,  
And Spring fills Winter's hemlock cup with  
mirth!

### THE DISTRESSED DAMSEL AND THE VERY PERFECT KNIGHT

Old Winter is a surly lout,  
And Spring a maiden fair  
With garlands in her hair  
And smiles and blushes rare,  
Who could not drive the tyrant out.—

Although her wiles and pretty pout  
Are potent past compare  
When hearts are staked, beyond a doubt  
She would be sadly put about  
If none should help her there!

He shakes his hoary locks at her  
And growls: "I will not go—  
'Tis Winter tells you so!"  
Alas! she does not know  
How feebly his old pulses stir,  
How false his words of valor were;  
And she is weak with woe—  
Soft raining tears her sweet eyes blur.  
"I beg you mercy, cruel sir,"  
She murmurs faint—when, lo!

Across the plain there rides at speed  
A very perfect knight,  
Enarmored all in white,  
His lance as sunray bright:  
"Now, who is this doth mercy plead?  
And who is this refuseth heed?  
Dear damsel, name thy plight!"  
She tells him all her tale of need;  
With levelled lance and charging steed  
He drives the churl aflight.

"An end to his false fronted power  
Who had not heart to stand!"  
He takes her lily hand  
And leads her through the land  
Delivered in that happy hour  
From its oppressor dree and dour. —  
So is it spring is bland  
Yet rugged too; the perfect flower  
Of strong sun wed with gentle shower:  
And very featly planned!

## THE SURVIVOR

Two score of us sung when the way was young—  
Two score, and a bold band we,  
With never a man in the caravan  
But yearned for the sandy sea.  
Two score of us died in the desert wide—  
Two score of us died, save one:  
Save the one who tells of the forty hells  
We lived ere the way was done.

In the swift twilight of the tropic night,  
With the last stride of his steed  
Ere his great heart broke, a courier spoke  
The call of a comrade's need.  
"The heathen," he cried, and the call rang wide,  
Loud echoing, tent to tent,  
"The heathen are out in a rabble rout,  
And our camp's last round is spent!"

Two score of us rode where the moonlight glowed  
On the desert floor as white  
As a winding sheet—and the wan rays' cheat  
Made a corpse face of the night.  
Two score of us lay when the arrow Day  
Shot out of the Archer's bow  
On the clotted sand of that godless land—  
Two score (saving one) laid low!

We laughed and we sung when the way was young;  
We sallied forth with a hymn  
To the god of war—then we steadied, for  
The errand we ran was grim;  
And I in the lead was a fool indeed,  
A fool and a murderer too—  
For the devils made us an ambushade,  
And I, I alone, won through!

And the fatal lure? 'Twas the love-light pure  
Flashed over the western sea;  
'Twas the thought of one 'neath the homeland sun  
Who waited and dreamed of me—  
Who waited and dreamed while the red rays  
gleamed  
On the desert floor as red,  
While the sun of love from the gray above  
Shone down upon honor dead!

### REVOLVER REEF

Now, podner, look-a-here: you want to quit—  
Can't see no future brighter'n the pit  
O' blasted hopes an' shadder ha'nted gloom,  
Lost miners' souls a-pannin' out their doom.  
Sore on the luck, you want to turn your back  
On this here proposition, which it's black  
Enough, Gawd knows, an' sartin I'll admit;  
But, podner, 'tain't no time, right now, to quit!

I dopes it out like this: when things is punk  
As they kin be, it ain't no sense to funk,  
Lay down an' squeal. There ain't no wuss  
'N what's the wust. Here's what some poet cuss  
Has wrote about it—thing they made me learn,  
A kid at school. Somehow, it stuck: "The turn  
O' tide's its lowest ebb." Now, pard, a leaf  
Out o' the story o' Revolver Reef.

Tale come to me, o' course, at second hand  
(Fust bein' bird meat, in Mashonaland),  
An' run this wise: Two chaps, like you an' me,  
Out for the yaller means o' misery  
An', duplicatin' us two fools ag'in,  
Clean god-forsaken—burros bone an' skin,  
Grub gone, an' not a cussed thing in sight  
But earth's big bones up-croppin', bare an' white.

One on 'em—oh, jest such a sort as you—  
He swore he'd quit, an' went an' done it, too;  
Jest—simply—*quit!* It ain't no consequence,  
Sech carrion ain't, in any common sense;  
But see how this worked out. The other lad,  
Believin' better's next to bottom bad,  
The same as I be'n tellin' you, hung on—  
Deef, dumb an' blind, half starvin', still hung on.

Well, that pore devil done his time in hell,  
An' then, as luck would have it, simply fell—  
More like a corpse 'n any livin' thing—  
Plumb in a survey camp. "Jest one more fling,"  
Says he, when they was handin' out advice  
(Quite scientific like) to shake it, "with the dice;  
Jest one throw more, to see how luck'll break—  
That is, if you gents cares to lay the stake."

An', say, he struck it, too, he sho'ly did,  
An' struck it rich—he *were* the candy kid!  
One day, a-settin' on a heap o' stones,  
Jest gazin' 'round, he seen a bunch o' bones,  
Picked clean an' dry as any autumn leaf,  
An' by 'em laid a gun—*his podner's*, Chief!  
Well, now the story's purty nigh to told—  
Them rocks was full, *plumb* full, o' virgin gold!

Now, podner, look-a-here. It makes me sick,  
This quittin' talk o' yourn. You got to stick,  
That's all they is in to it. Sabby that?  
No member of this firm—an' this goes, pat—  
Won't have no epitaffy to the tune:  
"Here lies a miner, which he quit too soon!"  
But when the last, lone card is out, an' croak  
Time comes—look, podner, *look*: good Gawd, it's  
*smoke!*

## THE KEEPER OF THE LIGHT "SURREN- DERS TO THE AUTHORITIES"

The brand of guilt is on my heart,  
Upon my hands the stain—  
Incarnadined with kindred blood,  
As were the hands of Cain;  
Oh, worse than fratricidal crime—  
Son by his father slain!

Nay, seize me not—stand back! Ye need  
Not look upon me so—  
For I am here of mine own will,  
And would not, might I, go:  
Christ's death upon the Tree was not,  
Meseemeth, greater woe!

Think not "'Tis but a crazy dream,  
Some phantom sired by Night  
And mothered by a brooding brain";  
For—I—have seen a sight—  
More dear to me than living was  
The honor of the Light!

You've seen a mother with her child—  
Your child! E'en so we nursed,  
With more than lover's zeal, the Light,  
Its welfare ever first:  
But oh, the loneliness of life  
In that stone cell accurst!

And Leo—that's my boy, you know—  
He had a love ashore,  
While I had neither kith nor kin  
Save him—nor needed more;  
So I was well enough content,  
But his young heart was sore.

The vacant sky, the sobbing sea,  
The blown and blinding spray,  
The voices of lost winds that drooled  
The livelong empty day,  
The ghostly peopled solitude  
Stole Leo's mind away.

One day—that day!—as dark drew near  
And time to flash our light  
Athwart the dun skies oceanward  
(It was a hellish night!)  
My Leo stopped me on the stair—  
His eyes were fever bright!

I sought to sooth him and prevail,  
But sought, alas, in vain;  
And while I labored, sick at heart,  
The night rushed on amain:  
O God, the duel in the dark,  
And on these hands the stain!

O God, the battle—and the stain—  
And his mad lust to kill!  
O God, the light that awful night  
That pierced the fog bank chill,  
But could not 'lume my darkened heart!—  
Do with me as you will!

### NICOTIAN FANCIES

By my solitary fireside in the middle hours of night  
I am dreaming wide horizons in the embers' fitful  
light—  
Lost amid the city's millions, lonely in the crowded  
ways,  
I withdraw the baffling curtain, and the drama of  
the days  
Is enacted, swift and silent, to my uncompanioned  
gaze.



'Tis the magic of Nicotia that absolves dull vision's  
seal,  
Shows the facts of life are fictions and the dreams  
alone are real.

Step by step the plot develops, and the actors come  
and go  
Like the shadows of a cloud fleet when capricious  
breezes blow,  
Now with swift, impulsive passage, now reluctantly  
and slow.

How the Master of the Drama weaves the slender  
threads of fate  
In reticulated pattern; how the puppets love and  
hate,  
Strut and stagger, curse and worship, thinking  
theirs the pilot will,  
Though the Master, unacknowledged, rules the  
mechanism still—  
How the little actors agonize, declaim their love,  
their rage,  
Never heeding that the Playwright foreordained  
and set the stage!

Here the priest kneels at the cotside of the miser  
who for gold  
In the madness of the marketplace his heaven-hope  
has sold,  
All unrecking of the moment he must drop his dear  
bought dross,  
With his wealth too poor to purchase finger grip  
upon the Cross.  
Here the mother to her bosom clasps her infant,  
breathing wild  
Incoherent supplication for the world-way of her  
child;  
Here a son, the prayers forgotten once he whispered  
at her knee,

Gnaws the husks of late repentance. In her cottage  
on the lea  
Waits the sailor's lonely sweetheart, patient watcher  
of the sea.

Here the nun in pious pity on her mercy mission  
bound  
Halts to raise a sister, crushed with sin and sor-  
row, from the ground;  
Here a happy group is gathered round the altar lights  
of home—  
In the shadow of the portal like an evil plotting  
gnome  
Lurks the outcast son of darkness, envious, defiant. So  
Through the shifting scenes upon the stage the  
players come and go;  
Joy and sorrow, good and evil, dreams and visions,  
hopes and fears,  
Building and destroying—playing, children of ma-  
turer years,  
With new toys of faith and fortune, but the same  
old smiles and tears!

Now, as in the curling smoke phantasmagoric crea-  
tures teem,  
Coming nowhence, and nowhither passing from the  
embers' gleam,  
I discern in some small measure purpose of the drama  
scheme.  
And as they, who have no substance but in my  
ephemeral dream,  
May philosophize upon the "actualities of life,"  
So the question enters consciousness as trenchant as  
a knife:  
Who knows but, in space unlocal, there's a Smoker  
like to me—  
And myself a fleeting figure in the passing pageantry  
That within the curling smoke wreathes of his pipe  
he loves to see?

## JOTTINGS

### *Modern Magic*

Not Bagdad's fabled rug, nor wishing hat  
Of Fortunatus, nor Aladdin's lamp  
Could dry up seas, lay lofty mountains flat  
With half the might of this wee postage stamp.

### *The Skyscraper*

A twelvemonth gone, a gaping pit was here  
Where now the builder's massive triumph stands.  
How dull is nature, with all time to rear  
Her mountains, matched o'er night by human  
bands.

### *The Missing Tense*

It seems but yesterday that eager I  
Said: "Nothing is, but all things are to be."  
Now as I conjugate "to live," "to die,"  
Still nothing is—all things have been, for me.

## WAYMATES

Over the hills and through the heather,  
All in the merry midyear weather—  
Under the sky  
Of dear July,  
Wandering, just we two together.

You and I through the green leafed ways,  
You and I in the golden days—  
The ways of youth,  
The days of truth—  
Young life and love and tuneful lays!

Over the hills to the sunset strand,  
Over the waves to the wonderland  
    Beyond the dim  
    And gloaming rim  
Of the old gray world go, hand in hand—

Hand in hand (for the dice are thrown),  
Heart of my heart, my love, my own—  
    Blue sky o'er us  
    And before us  
Luring lights of the far Unknown.

### BY THE ROAD

'Twas an old, old man, and he called to me  
    From the roadside where he lay;  
And a pitiful sight was this to see  
    Of a February day!

On a bank of snow by the roadside bare  
    All wearily he reclined,  
Like a graven image of grim Despair  
    Alone with the keening wind.

He was wan and worn, and his face was seared  
    And seamed; but his beggar's rags  
I respected not, nor his ice-hung beard,  
    Nor Poverty's flapping flags—

For I knew full well who it was that lay  
    *In extremis* by the fence—  
And I heard, as I looked and turned away  
    And carelessly wended thence,

The silvery note of a mocking laugh  
    Down the wood road faintly ring—  
'Twas Winter who wearily dropped his staff,  
    The laugh was of gleeful Spring!

## THE LAST DAYS OF MAY

She is going, merry May—  
Speed her on her pastward way!

In her end is naught of tragic—  
She has wrought her spell of magic:

Maid of many witching wiles,  
Sudden tears and sunny smiles,

Laughing on a hundred hills,  
Singing in the running rills,

She has crowned the land with cheer,  
After winter doubly dear.

Now her joyous course is run,  
All her glad, green work is done—

Down the vista of the days'  
Sun and shadow checkered ways

She will pass with tears and laughter—  
Who is this, that cometh after?

'Tis herself—made doubly fair  
In her daughter's beauty rare;

Speed we May, who goeth soon!  
Greet we gentle, welcome June!

## THE PINELANDS OF MONMOUTH

I have scaled the steep of Sussex,  
Breasted Greenwood's limpid wave,  
Known the wooded Watchung ranges'  
Facile moods, or gay or grave;

In the years of budding manhood  
I have dreamed a future's dream  
On the midland heights of Mercer  
Where old Princeton's towers gleam.

From the Hackensack's headwaters  
To the bay of Delaware,  
From the Hook aspiring seaward  
To her western marches fair  
I have pilgrimmed Jersey's province  
To her uttermost confines—  
Knowing last, and holding dearest  
Monmouth's fairyland of pines.

I have heard the hymn of labor  
From her swarming cities rise,  
Heard the softer notes and sweeter  
Of her songbirds greet the skies;  
I have seen white winter mantle  
Wondrously her fertile fields,  
And the suns of summer urge them  
To most opulent of yields:

Fruit and grain, and luscious berries  
Of her tropic tempered south,  
And the royal melon, making  
Heaven of a human mouth.  
She is rich beyond all dreaming,  
Dowered past all States is she—  
And the fairest of her gems is  
Monmouth's pineland, by the sea.

Monmouth's pineland! Words of magic  
And of melody compound!  
There's the lave of lispings waters  
Running through their mellow sound;  
Song of Whippoorwill's weird music  
As of silver litten nights  
Plaining in the woodland arches  
He conducts his pagan rites.

Beauty, wed with wealth of power—  
Melody with might made one,  
As beyond the eastern gateway  
Restless tides of ocean run.  
And the salt gale of Atlantic,  
Mingling with the pine breath free,  
Sings through Monmouth's open temple  
In the pinelands by the sea!

### MEADOW FIRES

Dry ceremented, rustling ghosts  
Of summer people of the marsh—  
How mercilessly mow their hosts,  
With gatling fire, the fall winds harsh!

What memories of summer cling  
About these senile, nodding stalks;  
What echoes of the midyear ring,  
Knellwise, where reaper Autumn walks.

A shudder through the ragged ranks—  
Some premonition of a fate  
Shall shatter all their sad phalanx—  
A murmur: "Patience, brothers; wait!"

The day flows uneventful by,  
The sable sea of night its end.  
With dark, a stir—a reedy sigh,  
A thousand whispers: "Courage, friend!"

A roar upon the expectant air,  
A clanking as of some huge chain  
A fettered giant shakes—and there,  
Across the meadows, speeds a train.

A comet hurtling through the dark,  
A human laden meteor  
That, fiery flashing, spark on spark,  
Leaves trail across the meadow floor.

A coal has fallen 'mid the reeds;  
It flickers—wonders: "Live, or die?"  
They minister its feeble needs—  
The throw is won: "'Tis come," they cry.

"'Tis come!" The joyous cry of them  
Amens the prayer of waiting days.  
Red fingers clutch at each dry stem;  
They lean, enraptured, to the blaze.

### THE DISTRESSED POET FINDS BUT TO LOSE AGAIN MONEY LOST IN A GRAVEYARD

Here in the silent city of the dead,  
Thin snow-dust flying  
Through sibilant bare branches overhead,  
I found it lying  
When, like an old man derelict abed,  
The year was dying.

In all that wilderness of brown and white  
As day was going,  
Outborne upon the billowed front of night,  
The waif winds' blowing  
Revealed it, single isle of green in sight  
And scantily showing.

It danced and dallied on the airy wave,  
This lone, unlyric  
Lost atom wafted from some pocket cave,  
With motions Pyrrhic—  
Then caught upon a bush beside a grave,  
Oh, fate satiric!

I, fortune's football, hailed it: "Warmth and bread,  
Destiny's shaper!"  
And reached—like some live thing it fled,  
On breeze a-caper:



Lost in the silent city of the dead,  
Waste bit of paper!

### GREEN BUD AND BROWN LEAF

In April's prime I saw upon a bough  
Wherethrough spring's vital juice went coursing  
clear,  
Ecstatic harbinger of June days near,  
With buddage of fruition's vernal vow—  
Green wavelets curling from the rapid prow  
Of Flora's breeze borne barque—all brown and  
sere,  
One lonely, lingering leaf of yesteryear:  
And he himself was once as they are now!

Green bud—and ichor of the round year's youth!  
Broad leaf—and mystery of sun and shade,  
With fellowship of light and air and song!  
The green leaf, dreaming on the edge of truth—  
The brown leaf, reminiscent and dismayed:  
And green to brown, a wondrous way, not long!

### UP SPEAKS THE MINOR POET

Sir Critic, you have held the lists too long!  
Deem not that we, the minor singing horde,  
Your tinselled buckler dread, your wooden sword,  
With Falstaff swagger brandished. Whistling thong  
Were fitter to your hand—and back! You wrong,  
With sneering at a calendar explored  
Too well, and foregone voices ill restored,  
The candlebearers at the fane of song!

Think not for mercy at your hands we plead!  
We pity you, instead, in whose dim sight  
The lesser luminaries of the night  
Are placeless all. The robin hath indeed  
His friends, not less than lark and nightingale—  
Though of the dizzy heights of song he fail!

## THE SPADE

Hephæstuswise was forged my broad steel blade,  
As keen and bright and to its mission true  
As any sword that warrior e'er drew  
When love's and honor's proving he essayed  
In chivalry's proud lists. My helve was made  
From some old forest monarch's heart, that grew  
Long, silent years to meet the sky: deem you  
'Tis but a humble part that I have played?

List, then: I helped a sturdy pioneer  
With Axe, my brother, tame the wilderness—  
And where I once, beside the plundered wave,  
Hid golden booty for a buccaneer  
A buried city brought to light; and—yes,  
When he who made me died, I dug his grave!

## THE WAVE

Coursing the skybound sea,  
Under the sea of sky,  
This is the song of me—  
Ocean wayfarer, I!

Child of the brooding deep,  
Born of the wind's desire,  
Swift into life I leap,  
Lord of a wide empire.

Glad in the garish light,  
Light is the heart of me;  
And all the stars of night  
Crown me with mystery.

Roving leviathan  
Rests on my lulling breast,  
Ships at the will of man  
Keel-rend my crystal crest—

Yield to the onward urge,  
Or, making gallant fight,  
Match against hostile surge  
Steam might with ocean might.

I may not gain the shore,  
Two hundred leagues away,  
Join in the coastal war,  
Pass in a pall of spray.

Mine is the lesser gift;  
Yet with the whole to merge,  
Ever the lilting lift,  
Ever the forthright urge!

Under the sea of sky,  
Coursing the skybound sea,  
Ocean wayfarer, I,  
This is the song of me.

### THE SINGING LIFE

A clear song, a cheer song,  
When life is in its spring;  
With long thoughts, and strong thoughts.  
And will to high endeavor;  
A song of love and hope,  
When birds are on the wing—  
A song of hope and love,  
And faith for the forever.

A sweet song, full, strong,  
When life is in its prime;  
A light heart, a right heart,  
A sturdy heart of oak.  
A sweet song, full, strong,  
A deep toned summer chime;  
A high aspiring spirit,  
And a shoulder to the yoke.

A brave song, a grave song,  
When life is in its fall;  
A song of ripened harvests,  
Of autumn's calm repose;  
Of old days, the gold days,  
Fled now beyond recall,  
While drawing to the boundless deep  
Full tide the river flows.

A grave song, a brave song,  
To speed the waning year,  
When winter o'er a weary world  
Proclaims his empery;  
A pure faith, a sure faith,  
A faith to banish fear—  
Farewell, the landlocked river! Now,  
Godspeed across the sea!

#### CICADIAN INVITATION

I've heard again the locust's song —  
Beginning faint, then rising strong  
And setting all the air a-thrill  
To its insistent piping shrill:  
The first this summer! From a tree  
Across the way he called to me—  
The call of summer, clear and strong:  
I've heard again the locust's song.

Away with books! I will no more  
Their dreary, dusty pages pore.  
Far in some cool, sequestered nook,  
On grassy bank of crooning brook,  
Through green embowering canopies  
Disparted by the wanton breeze  
I'll watch across the azure sky  
Dream laden cloud flotillas ply.

Or by some mountain lakelet's verge  
Where, imitating ocean's surge,  
With Lilliputian mimic charge  
Wee plashy wavelets lap the marge  
And roll the pebbles in their shock  
As ocean grinds his rugged rock—  
I'll lie beside the water's edge  
And list the lispings of the sedge.

Lone wandering the winding ways,  
Through pasture land where kine at graze  
Untended crop lush grasses cool  
Or rest knee deep in shallow pool,  
I'll wade the daisies' golden sea  
And watch the constant questing bee  
A-cruise, bold buccaneering rover,  
For precious plunder of the clover.

I've heard the locust's song today—  
The summer's first! It seemed to say:  
"The crooning brook, the lakelet blue,  
The fields and woodland wait for you.  
Why linger in the city, fool,  
When country lanes are near and cool?"  
I've heard the locust's song today—  
A luring lilt—and I'll away!

### WAYFELLOWS

Fadeth the day's light;  
Long shadows, creeping,  
Vanguard the near night—  
Night time's for sleeping!

Gray grows the wide way,  
Dim in the gloaming;  
Greet we yon inn's ray—  
Weary of roaming.

Through thin and through thick,  
Wet way or dusty,  
Thou and I, old stick,  
Tried friends and trusty,

In winter's dark hours  
Worldwide have wandered,  
Summertime, 'tween showers,  
Sunlit days squandered.

Through thick and through thin,  
Brother and brother,  
Nor needing more kin,  
Each, than the other,

Year out and year in,  
Highway and byway,  
One way has aye been  
Your way and my way.

Up hill and down dale,  
Foul or fine weather—  
Blow fair or blow gale,  
We two together

Took what the gods sent,  
Equally sharing;  
Where'er the road went,  
High hearted faring.

Fadeth the day's light;  
Long shadows, creeping,  
Herald the near night—  
Night time, for sleeping!

### I WILL STAND FAST

I have fared through the fields in November,  
Through the broad, brown fields of ripe autumn,  
And heard with a sense beyond senses  
Murmurous echoes attending

The ebb of the year's high tide.  
I have lain, wander weary,  
Lain on the dusky, the warm, bared bosom  
Of welcoming earth, while the wine,  
The rich essence of autumn,  
Upyielded soul of exhilarant airs of November,  
Tawny, and taking its amber lit tintage  
From root tapped soil and the long ranked hosts of  
    the corn shocks,  
Ran, fluid fire, through my bodily being,  
With runes of the year's decadence—  
Strange mingling of memories and voices prophetic,  
Singing with prosody mellow, in strain antiphonic,  
Triumphantly singing, recessional, swelling again to  
    strong climax,  
A chant of the past and the end not far,  
Palingenesis brooding beyond.  
I have roamed the still fields in November,  
And myself am attuned with the harvest,  
Ripe for the Reaper am I.

I have wandered the woods in November,  
I have fared like a hero Valhallan:  
He, fired with the foam crested mead cup,  
And I with the distillate colors,  
The red and the flaming yellow,  
The bronzes and Puritan russets of autumn—  
With isolate remnants of lingering vernal verdure.  
I have danced in the leaves a-rustle,  
My city thoughts rustling from me  
As flutter the foliage flocks:  
I have flung my arms like the branches abroad,  
The supplicant arms of the oak tree,  
Yearning to grasp the Creator;  
Yearning un-potent, not futile.  
I have heard the mad winds go by,  
The rush and the gallop of otherworld horses,  
Couriers heralding winter that ride  
Driving the green hosts before them,

And whooping up wind wolves behind—  
The soul of the wind has possessed me,  
Restless, forever at seek:  
I will arise in its strength and its passion,  
I will go forth to my quest.

I have stood by the sea in November,  
Stood fast where the sea pack leaps frothing,  
Held hard on the leash but leaping,  
And storming the unshaken strand.  
I have stood on the glittering shingle  
And felt all the strength of the earth  
Come subtly with alchemy creeping  
Till my uttermost corporal atom  
Was charged with the permeant currents  
Of soul continental, unyielding.  
And I am a continent—I  
Am a shore where the waves of an ocean,  
Mysterious, limitless, grand,  
Come charging and breaking—retreating,  
Back beaten, forever defeated,  
Forever new armed:  
With the strength of a continent in me,  
I will stand fast to the end.

### WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP?

First, mutual need, the magnet power  
That draws the errant bee to the flower;  
Outgive and intake balancing then,  
As earth takes the seed and yields again;  
Doubling of joys and halving of cares,  
Friendship's dividend carrying shares,  
As song in echo interest bears;  
Mutual need and mutual troth,  
Far as may be from the star-and-moth;  
Complement natures, like brook and banks,  
Birdsong and leafshade, giving and thanks;  
Faith and faithworthiness—here, my friend,  
Is friendship's creed, beginning and end.



## ALL-IN-ALL

I am the soul of the sighing breeze,  
The sweet of the summer shower;  
I live in the leafy lisp of trees,  
The ecstasy of the flower.

I am the fire of the solar light,  
The stir in the bud at blow;  
I am the spirit of brooding night,  
The spell of the star dust's glow.

I am the wrath of the rushing gale,  
The weight of the wave am I;  
My might is known in the lightning's flail  
And the thunder's threatful cry.

The light am I of the lover's dream,  
The pulse of the poet's song,  
The gray philosopher's pregnant theme,  
The hope of the common throng.

The strength of the toiler's arm am I,  
The planner's divine desire;  
Above the red field of war I fly,  
I burn in the altar fire.

In me, the strength of man's endeavor,  
The courage of woman's pain;  
I am the Now in the Forever,  
As in your "loss" I am gain.

Of living, of time and space and star  
I am the source and the goal;  
All beings within my being are:  
The circumferential Soul!

## THE LITTLE OLD LADY WHO LOOKED UP THE ROAD

They built her of broomsticks and shaped her with  
straw

(Just two little mischievous lads),  
The dearest old lady that ever you saw  
(Great larks for two fun loving tads!);  
They clothed her with garments long since out of  
mode,

The Little Old Lady Who Looked Up the Road.

She stood in a corner beside the front fence  
(And how the bypassers did stare!),  
One hand raised to shade her eyes, gazing intense  
(“She seems half alive, I declare!”),  
Daylong, with an earnestness seldom bestowed,  
The Little Old Lady Who Looked Up the Road.

The days came and went, and the seasons flew by  
(With two little lads growing fast),  
And springtime or autumn, wet weather or dry  
(How swiftly one’s boyhood is past!),  
Still, whether men garnered or whether men sowed,  
The Little Old Lady Looked Straight Up the Road.

The wind and the rain and the sunshine of years  
(Now one of the lads wandered wide)  
She bore with the patient endurance of seers  
(The other, his brother, had died),  
And whether it blossomed or whether it snowed,  
The Little Old Lady Still Looked Up the Road.

One day there was noise and confusion within  
(The home of the two lads, you know);  
“We’re moving away,” said a voice in the din  
(An echo of one long age)—  
And then, as the van creaked away with its load,  
The Little Old Lady Looked, Sad, up the Road.

What was it she looked for, so long and in vain?  
(The lad who had wandered came home.)  
Deserted, who knows all her story of pain?  
("Now hence nevermore shall I roam.")  
And truly he paid all the debt that he owed  
The Little Old Lady Who Looked Up the Road.

"Henceforth nevermore shall her lot be neglect!"  
(He said to his own little lads.)  
Now, rejuvenated and gaily bedecked  
(Great larks for two fun loving tads!),  
Rejoices again in her foretime abode  
The Little Old Lady Who Looks Up the Road.

### DISGUISES

Ere yet my youth was spent,  
With all the fire of youth  
I vowed: "I'll see the world,  
And seek the utter truth!"

Beneath transparent masks  
Their secret selves I traced,  
And dreamed that mirth was false  
And joy was double faced.

"Mirth's but a mask," I said,  
"Ill veiling lines of pain."  
And laughter but, I thought,  
A rainbow—tears, the rain.

Honor and love I sought.  
They came. I learned—too late—  
Disgrace is honor's twin,  
And love lives near to hate.

Some time I dwelt with grief,  
Drained sorrow's bitter grail;  
And lo! I learned these are  
But sympathy's thin veil.

I fraternized with want,  
And wisdom came to me;  
Unmasked I knew the sprite  
For gentle charity!

Now youth is spent, and age  
Dispels the dreams of youth,  
Good in all ill I find  
So doubled faced is truth!

## THE SHIP THAT WAS

### *The Dream of the Designer*

Come, let us build us a vessel,  
A marvel of strength and of speed,  
Fit with the wild winds to wrestle  
And bid the mad billows take heed:  
The winds and the waves  
Her minist'ring slaves.

Aye, she shall have full dominion  
And empery over the seas—  
Speed of the gull on sure pinion,  
Leviathan's power—and these  
Shall cause her to reign  
Supreme on the main.

She shall be queen of the waters,  
Magnificent, regal, divine;  
Fairest of Neptune's fair daughters,  
Unrivalled, superlative. Shine,  
Hospitable suns,  
On her as she runs.

### *The Builders*

Hark! The ring of the axeman's stroke  
Echoing through the woodland wide;

Prostrate, o'ertaken in his pride,  
Bole and bough, lies the stubborn oak.

Subterranean toilers bore  
Deep in the ferrous heart of earth;  
Delving they drain its dearest worth,  
Tapping the riches at its core.

Gleam and glow like the mouth of hell;  
Sweltering devils grope and reel,  
Feeding the frenzied flame—and steel  
Comes to furnish the ship a shell.

By the side of the sea men toil,  
Laying the keel and ribs a-true,  
Skill be theirs to the line to hew!  
Who malingers, may God assoil!

### *The Launching*

Creature of a hundred climes,  
A hundred minds, ten thousand hands,  
Thou mayst own allegiance to  
One flag, but folk of many lands  
Trusting in thy staunchness rest:  
Be true, all humankind commands.

Thrilling like a sentient thing,  
The mighty vessel leaves the ways.  
Eager for her element,  
Rejoicing in the coming days;  
For her worthiness, to Him,  
The God of mariners, be praise!

### *The Voyage Begun*

"All ashore that's going ashore!"  
The last farewells are said,  
And they who go and they who stay  
Are one and all godsped:

God speed the good ship on her way  
Across the ocean bed!

The final hawser is cast off,  
Her flags the dull air spurn,  
Her eager engines urge the screws  
That insolently churn  
The laggard wave. May she, and hers,  
Thus joyously return!

*The Warning*

Now who are these that impiously  
My suzerainty defy?  
Bold race of mortals! Have ye not  
Full oft my vengeance seen?  
Why thus in false security  
My salt dominions ply?  
If former lessons be forgot,  
This one shall teach, I ween!

“Your faring fathers spread the sail,  
But ye have harnessed steam.  
Their bleaching bones my dooryard pave—  
And hold ye yours so cheap  
To risk them thus? Ye brave the gale  
And insolently deem  
Your craft immune from storming wave  
And terrors of the deep.

“Ye reckless ones that challenge fate,  
And challenge me, too bold!  
I give ye warning yet once more—  
If ye are wise, give ear,  
Lest ye my wrath shall underrate  
And, learning, perish: *Hold!*  
Ye men may rule beyond my shore,  
But I am master here!”

### *The Wreck*

The night is clear, the starlight 'lumes the lane,  
The ocean greyhound blithely cleaves the main.  
The Sabbath day is ending, and the throng  
On board are busy, some with sacred song,  
And some with thoughts less other-world—but none  
Has foresight keen and sure enough to run  
A single hour ahead and read the fate  
In ambush for the vessel and her freight,  
So weak is mortal vision.—*What was that?*  
“Why, nothing serious. Let’s have our chat,  
And then turn in.—A berg? It cannot be—  
But anyway, the boat is certainly  
Unsinkable.”—Another hour, and see;  
A mighty ship, sore wounded unto death,  
And hundreds who will nevermore draw breath,  
A cityful of men and women drowned;  
A score frail boats with precious cargo, bound  
For no port but—whatever may be found,  
With chance as pilot. Happened, chance was kind  
(Might just as well have not been so inclined!)  
And so the castaways were rescued.—Mind,  
How poor a thing is life when one survives  
The sudden snuffing out of loved ones’ lives!—  
A hundred names of heroes to enroll  
On heroism’s honored, crowded scroll.

### *Envoi*

Enough! What boots it us to dwell  
Upon that scene—transplanted hell?  
The widows and the orphans know  
How streams of sympathy can flow,  
How kind the world is (when our woe  
Has roots that reach beyond our ken  
Into the lives of myriad men);  
And we are not the first to learn  
That fires of martyrdom can burn  
In humbler as in haughty hearts

And stokers, stewards, play their parts  
With selfishness as good to scan  
As any heart of gentleman.  
The dead—are dead; but we who live  
And to their deeds true honor give  
Learn life's too high a price for speed:  
The lesson grows of noble seed,  
And sown in precious soil indeed;  
And sadly in this saddest hour  
We learn the limits of man's power.

### TO A TRUE FRIEND

I found you lying in the woods,  
My nut brown briar bowl,  
And you were musty but "the goods"  
(For smokers of pipes talk *négligé*)—  
By a path where I strolled of an autumn day.  
Nestled in old dead leaves you lay,  
Looking as brown and dead as they;  
And he was poor of soul  
Who, breaking your bit in his awkward way  
Cast you off—but you patient lay  
Till I came carelessly wending by  
With a vagrom foot and a roving eye  
And happened you there in the muck to spy,  
My fosterling brown bowl!

Now those there be who'd have rather died,  
My nut brown briar bowl,  
Than turn from the beaten path aside  
To pick you up—'tis a silly pride  
That o'erleaps the goods the gods provide  
And sneers at wayside dole;  
But bulletin it in Philistine Gaith,  
I gladly turned from the too strait path:  
What a warm, ripe gleam thy round side hath,  
My beautiful brown bowl!



For under the mould on your swelling round,  
My cherished mottled bowl,  
I saw that your stuff was sweet and sound,  
And knew that a treasure had been found:  
And now the gleaming coal  
Of the fragrant leaf that, crinkling, glows  
Just south of my titillated nose  
Is teeming with dreaming of southland skies  
Where glowing and growing the warm field lies,  
While generous juices in sap veins run  
And the rich leaf mellows beneath the sun;  
It has not found its goal  
Till mate with you, brown bowl!

Remember the wonderful nuptial night—  
Your second, hard old bowl?  
When I was priest and drew up tight  
The wedlock bond, while your constant light  
And incense wreathes upstole,  
And we quaffed, to the bride Nicotia's health  
Deep of the warm grape's ruby wealth;  
Not as the wooers who win by stealth,  
Nor those who take cheap toll  
And run—but confident, bold  
As the salt beard Vikings of old  
We lit the flame of a great desire  
And deep in the red core of its fire  
We sealed the pledge of a sacred troth  
Inviolatè, sure, till upon us both  
Time's breath blow chill and his dog, decay,  
Pitiless gnawing and gnawing away,  
Turn the red of your poll  
Like the black of mine to an ashen gray  
(We figure it, smoking, every day  
In pantomime grave as our hearts are gay),  
My stark old briar bowl!

## AT THE TURN OF THE TIME TIDE

Daylong the countless cohorts of the snow  
Have marched from leaden sallyports, in skies  
That face with frowning front a world that lies  
In sullen, buttressed bivouac below—  
Soft, unremittent as the minutes' flow,  
Resistless as old Ocean's tidal rise—  
Till wide the white flag of surrender flies;  
While sand by sand the year's last moments go.

The last night of the year! O wondrous night,  
Mysteriously populous with ghosts,  
With haunting voices that may not be stilled  
More mystically vocal. Soft winged flight  
Of dead days' disembodied homeless hosts,  
Mute wraiths of dreams and visions unfulfilled!

---

The midnight strikes: it is the time tide's turn,  
The old year passes, and the old year's pain.  
As mariners who from an unknown main  
Make happy issue leave their fears astern  
And steer their battered bark with sole concern  
For port, and fruit of their pelagic pain,  
So we, whose quest is for a nobler gain,  
Dismiss the old and to the new year yearn.

The first morn of the year! O wondrous morn,  
Bright leader of the days' procession, blest  
With opulence of promise, hope and all  
The high resolve of youth—O year reborn,  
Reborn ourselves we turn us from the west  
Of setting suns—we heed thine Orient call!

## FELLOWSHIP

These things I saw upon a summer day:  
A brook that loved and lingered by a flower;  
A bird on bough that gave song thanks for shower

Of sun; slow sailing the cerulean way,  
And brightly twinned upon the nether bay,  
A single cloud craft; and, with day's last hour,  
A lonely coast where rugged rocks gave dour  
Resistance to the waves, with smoke of spray.

Such fellowship I found in nature—each  
Bound up in all, and all in each—the high  
Creation epic woven rune by rune  
In cloud and shadow, yearning wave and beach—  
Quotidian thaumaturgy of the sky,  
And restless tides that follow on the moon.

### THE DIVER

*Stout panoplied in metal guise,  
Armored and helmed so knightlywise,  
Whither goest thou, Diver?  
"Into the gloom of a living grave  
Full forty fathom 'neath the wave!"  
God go with thee now, Diver !*

Rattle of chains over the side—  
Into the waiting, wicked tide,  
Into the deep, the Diver!  
Pay out the line—send air, more air—  
God knows he'll need it, buried there:  
Safe may He keep the Diver!

Up comes the Diver, the man-fish.  
*What sawest thou, Diver, there?*  
A drownèd ship I saw, and through  
Her wounded sides a ghastly crew  
Of sad-eyed sailormen stare—  
Thank God for the sound of voices,  
But most of all for the air!

I've heard full many a silence,  
In many a lonely place—  
The desert and the mountain top;

But try a forty fathom drop  
Through yonder watery space,  
And, take my word for it, comrade—  
There you'll see God face to face!"

### HERE AND HEREAFTER

High hearted seekers after truth, most rare  
And radiant goal that lures ambition's eyes,  
Are they who count this world's best gains nowise  
Commensurate with cost; hold wisdom fair,  
Scale the bleak heights of thought and, 'stablished  
there,

Yet higher yearn. Alas, the elusive prize!  
Pursued the more, the more the vision flies,  
And they who highest grope grasp empty air.

Yet oft who seemeth vanquished nobly wins!  
Ofttimes alone, despairing in the night,  
Sees failure's front revealed transformed, di-  
vine.

Where baffled reason halts, there faith begins.  
The darkest shadow surest proves the light,  
And doubt obscures that faith may clearer  
shine.

---

Suppose one prisoned in a hollow sphere,  
Of vast extent, ensealed, within whose bound  
'Tis freely his to move; will he not sound  
Its uttermost extent, deem freedom dear,  
And covet the unknown beyond the sheer  
Impenetrable walls that hedge him round,  
And conjure terrors that himself confound,  
Of cruel tyranny, and doubt, and fear?

So prisoned are we all! So we have thought  
Ourselves oppressed; so we have drunk despair,  
Our dreams of conquest turned to dust; have  
lain  
In fetters that our silly selves have wrought,

Inert; with unavailing (unfaithed) prayer,  
With senseless questionings and needless pain.

---

When lawless lust and every noxious weed  
Uprearing baneful growths of want and woe  
In social slime offend your sense, then know  
That want is charity's thin mask, that need  
Is opportunity disguised. Well heed  
Lest, thus unveiled, you pass them by, for so  
Salvation slips! Deem self the one dread foe,  
And simple brotherhood enough of creed.

Grasp immortality while yet thou art  
Of earth; our deeds it is that never die;  
Theirs, immortality of influence.  
Who serves his fellow men with fearless heart,  
And ready hand, shall with unclouded eye  
Foreview his way when he departeth hence.

## THE LAST HOMECOMING OF MAYOR GAYNOR

Wild spirit of the wave,  
Troubled soul of the sea,  
Hold in the leash your hounds,  
White lipped billows that leap,  
A frothing and foaming pack,  
Taking up, eager and hot, the trail of the har-  
rowing keel.  
Over a watery plain at peace,  
Calm in its outward mien as in still, inscrutable  
deeps,  
Bear softly, bear safe the funeral ship that comes,  
Bringing him home.

Soul of the wind,  
Restless, vengeful wanderer over the earth,  
Stay in mercy thy hand, heavy in smiting—  
Hold aloof the ravishing gale,

Forth send the most mild of thy messenger troop,  
Zephyrs that whispering run upon the waters;  
Let them hitherward waft,  
Borne thistle light on kindly favoring airs  
But clear as a vesper bell, unmistakably kind,  
The well wishes, fresh coined in opulent friendship's  
mint,  
The grief sharing and ministering urge of brothers  
over the sea,  
As he comes home,  
Home to his people.

Now, Lusitania, queen of wide waters,  
Fearing not wind nor wave,  
Rival, in man made beauty and might,  
Of them, the fruits and the tools of Divine machi-  
nation,  
Sail proudly, yet with humility,  
Knowing the nature, noble and rare, of this thy  
consecrate freight;  
All that is left of a man,  
Envelope mortal and mean of a soul immortal and  
great.  
'Tis hero's clay in thy keeping,  
And the trust is a holy trust.  
A sorrowing city waits,  
A mother with eyes of sadness that yearn to the  
harbor,  
And on, with the penetrant vision of mothers  
Whose sons fare far waters,  
On to the distant main where thou, Lusitania, far-  
est hereward with speed,  
Bringing him home to the city, the mother bereft,  
dolorosa;  
Bringing him home.

Winds and the waves, be kind —  
Be kind to the hurrying vessel  
That bears to the city her son,

Lest her grief grow with waiting,  
Foresuffering keenly the pangs  
Of a sorrowful homecoming,  
The mother's desire to be alone with her dead.  
Bring him home!

## WAYWISE AND FOOTFREE

Oh, what if a friend plays traitor,  
And what if a lover's false?  
When frowneth the front of Fate or  
The foot of minx Fortune halts—  
Why, then, the man who's a man in each part of  
him,  
Head of him, hand of him, heart of him—  
End as the start of him—  
Scorning Fortune, the flirt,  
Hideth his hurt.

Serene in the battle's losing,  
As calm if he wins his fight,  
Whatever the gods send choosing  
(So making his own their might)  
Undismayed, unafraid, gives he the flower of him;  
Faithfully to the last hour of him  
With all the power of him,  
Flatfoot, face to the front,  
Beareth life's brunt.

And, whether the day be sunny  
Or whether the way be dark,  
Be hemlock his cup or honey,  
A tragedy or a lark,  
Always he knows as he goes, in the soul of him—  
Surely he knows in the whole of him  
That no control of him  
Hath Fate: unmastered aye  
Goeth his way.

## THE MARSHLANDS

Oh, the marshlands of New Jersey,  
Oh, the broad moors near the sea,  
Where the salt winds off the ocean  
Wander far and fast and free.

Oh, the tides in winding channels  
Hidden in the meadow grass,  
Where with hulls unseen, ghost vessels,  
Gliding schooners bayward pass;

And the nodding and the lipping  
Of the zephyr haunted sedge,  
And the mallows' flaming petals  
On the sluggish ditch's edge;

And the meadow lark, sky scaler,  
Mounting up on tiny wings,  
Flooding upper space with music—  
Largesse free, but fit for kings;

And the fleecy flocks of cloudland,  
Browsing o'er their sunny leas,  
And the flitting of their shadows,  
Playing with each vagrant breeze.

Oh, the brave life of the marshes,  
Jersey's moorlands, green and wide;  
And the brotherhood that crowns it,  
Blowing wind and flowing tide.

## AT PRINCETON JUNCTION

Due east and west the iron highway lies  
Where pass and pass again fleet trains that seem  
Mere shifting phantom figures of a dream;  
And north, beyond the fair wide valley, rise  
Low hills whereon the college towers gleam.



O'er height and open valley is dispread  
The languor of a summer afternoon—  
The drowsy, purpled stillness of late June;  
Warm zephyrs wander lightly overhead,  
Responsive hums the wires' Aeolian tune.

Here on the bank beside the shimm'ring track  
Traced by the railroad's overhanging haze.  
I lounge, alone. 'Twas thus in other days—  
Ah, me, how musing memory calls them back!—  
A college youth, I trod these pleasant ways.

'Twas thus, I say—and yet not wholly thus,  
For one there was most constant at my side,  
A college mate—ah, God, the foolish pride  
That broke the happy bond and parted us,  
To drift and drift apart, while friendship died.

He wanders far among the towns of men,  
While me the old, familiar places know—  
Wide worlds apart our divers currents flow;  
Yet, sure am I that they will cross again  
As up and down the busy world we go.

What changes will attend the passing years?  
Will alchemy of time transmute the old  
Alloy of baser metal to pure gold?  
And which will be fulfilled—my hopes? My  
fears?  
And what the sequel when the tale is told?

The passing trains are phantoms of a dream;  
To me, this drowsy afternoon,  
The wires sing a sad, threnodic tune—  
Across the valley Princeton's towers gleam  
And, surely, hope is fitter far for June!

## JACK

You ask accommodation, stranger? Say—  
I ain't no grouch, but then, it's jest this way:  
You come a-steaming up in that big car  
O' yourn—dod blast the thing! You've travelled  
far,  
Got far to go, an' ask me for the night  
To put you up. It ain't my style—not quite!—  
To grudge a traveller a bed an' snack,  
But—stranger, say: I hain't forgot our Jack!

Who's Jack? Oh, jest a leetle yaller cur—  
But my gal loved him, an' we both loved her,  
We shore did, stranger! Mary died aged seven,  
Jest sort o' went to find her ma in heaven,  
An' left me an' Jack—jest him an' me.

Jack—cutest little pup you ever see,  
Bright as a button, busy as a bee,  
An' everythin' I'd left in God's big world—  
Come limpin' in one summer afternoon an' curled  
Up in my arms—you never *see* such eyes!  
I done the best I knowed how, doctorwise,  
Tied up the bleedin' paw—big tourin' car  
Had done it—then, jest prayed an' waited. Far  
Inter the night I held him. Then I saw  
Poor Jack was swellin'—for 'twa'n't jest the paw,  
Like I'd be'n hopin'; Jack was hurt inside,  
Injured internal, like. Midnight, he died.  
But I'm a-keepin' you. Well, I—*shot—Jack!*  
Then, somehow; suthin' hit me; things went  
black.

Next day—right over there by yonder tree—  
I digged another grave; there—don't you see,  
Three graves a-row? An' this yere cabin's mine.  
Folks call me Crazy Bill, an' I opine  
They'm not so fur off. Mighty out o' date,  
A-thinkin' dogs has souls! It's gittin' late,

An' I don't believe there's no use stoppin' here,  
Stranger. It sorter seems like I don't keer  
Fur company, fur somehow—I'm sort o' queer!

## THE SEVENTH EDWARD OF ENGLAND

### I

'Tis midnight by old, storied Thames;  
Beneath black bridges arching o'er  
Its leaden tide from shore to shore  
No burdened craft of commerce stems  
The river wrapped in mystery  
Seeking its ancient love, the sea,  
Its goal for countless ages more—  
Aye, till upon its either bank  
(Where ebbs and flows the human tide,  
Men meeting here from far and wide,  
Live shuttles intricately plied—  
And palaces of royalty  
And halls and marts of art and trade,  
Where destinies are marred and made,  
Rise grandly rank by serried rank)  
The race is dead, its glory fled,  
Its volumed annals all unread,  
Those thick walls formless wood and stone,  
And the reft river runs alone.

### II

'Tis midnight by the Thames; and herding out  
From palaces of pleasure, garish-gay,  
With laugh and merry quip the babbling rout  
Swarms volubly, with gossip of the play,  
Though now and then the graver minds: "They  
say  
The King is critically ill; no doubt  
A nervous rumor, sprung to life to-day—  
To-morrow's news will spread the truth about."

'Tis midway of the murky London night,  
And homeward hastes the weather scolding  
throng;  
In Mammon's temples dies the luring light,  
Dead are the echoes of the play and song.  
Deep in the city shadows Man-Gone-Wrong  
Slinks forth in quest of prey; has none insight  
Into that pregnant future that ere long  
Shall high and low in common grief unite?

There is unease upon the midnight air,  
A sudden sense that unknown ill impends;  
As one who subtly dreads a blow unfair,  
Although surrounded by supposed friends.  
With strange new note that sharply ill portends,  
The newsboy hawking his belated ware:  
*"Within the hour the King's life ends!"*—  
Dread prophecy, convincing to despair!

### III

Hark!  
In the dark  
And the silence between the days  
The knell  
Of the bell  
Where near the Cross on the dome it sways!  
How it falls  
From St. Paul's  
Cathedral tower  
At this solemn hour—  
The deep, full note of a nation's grief,  
To rise and swell  
Into wondrous power  
And compass beyond belief:  
Passing the bounds of the homeland wide—  
Over seas  
To the colonies,  
To tell

The folk at the world's far side  
That a king, a king of men has died!

#### IV

Men in the city who hear its beat  
Pause in the gloom of the rain swept street,  
Turn blanched faces to those at their side:  
"The King—it means our brave King has died!"  
The mother, out of her light sleep roused,  
Thinks first of her man child safely housed;  
Her hand to the bedside crib outsteals,  
A-pulse with joy as the babe it feels:  
"Thy father, my son, is spared to us—  
God help the poor Queen afflicted thus;  
In Him is the widow's comfort!" Aye,  
Up from the hospital's cots a cry  
Forthwells from hearts that have dwelt with pain,  
A prayer from those who pray not in vain  
For the King who died—and the new King's reign.  
At morn the children with bated breath  
Will ask of the mystery of death  
And learn that on mankind one and all,  
On king and commons, on great and small,  
The same dark shadows of sorrow fall.

#### V

O manly life! O kingly end!  
Not less the man when more the king!  
Thy triple virtues who shall sing,  
As husband, father, and as friend—  
And more than each, than all of these,  
As that "Good Guardian"—thus thy name—  
Who ruled a nation's destinies  
And cherished well the altar flame  
Of England's weal? With Alfred and the other  
great  
Wise helmsmen of her Ship of State  
In letters of immortal gold

Emblazoned on her glory's shield  
Must Albion place, nor ever yield,  
The name of her last Edward—he  
Who served less long than faithfully;  
Who, never called to war's red field,  
Was among statesmen high enrolled;  
Loved peace, with honor; caring naught  
For vain pretensions, wisely wrought  
For happiness in English homes,  
Wherever England's banner streams;  
Who kept alight and burning bright  
The lamp of learning; nourished arts,  
Gave trade and science their due parts,  
With equal handed care—laid siege  
But to his countrymen's brave hearts,  
And, conquered, held them surely liege!

## VI

The King, the King is dead! God save the King,  
his son,  
And may his lifeway nobly as his great sire's run!

## AFTER READING LONGFELLOW

Not as the meteor whose flaming car  
With rebel fury vaunts inutile might  
Athwart the startled heavens: such a light  
As from a coastal headland ranges far:  
Or as the glow of some calm, holy star  
Abiding on the altarpiece of night,  
Unjealous of the censers' lifted light—  
Content, and patient as the planets are.

He looked, clear eyed, into his heart, and wrote.  
He shot his arrow songs, and found a friend  
Where'er they fell. Not his the elfin flute,  
The martial trumpet. His the organ's note,  
That builds melodic mountains—at the end  
Majestic echoing in hearts born mute.

## OF POE ENVYING THE ANGEL ISRAFEL

Strange progeny of chance and choice—rude sire  
And dam of destinies, ignobly joined—  
To purge his baser metal be purloined  
A precious spark of pure Promethean fire  
And spun his soul in one ecstatic wire  
Whose vibrant yearnings were in music coined  
That conjured dim cathedrals, arched and groin-  
ed:  
With cynic gargoyles on each airy spire.

Could he have dwelt where Israfel made mute  
The singing spheres with envy of his art,  
Had it been joy or sorrow to discern  
Still fairer, further worlds—a wilder lute,  
The organ of some hotter kindled heart,  
That storms the stars with melody supern?

### NOTES

#### *The Daily Newspaper*

Like some deep lying lake among the hills  
Whereunto pour the universal rills,  
It holds the candid mirror to our gaze  
And bids us frankly view our works and ways.

#### *Love*

Is it a taper at a holy shrine,  
Or fire of fate that lures to death and shame?  
Well! Whether it be evil or divine,  
'Tis our too eager breath that quells the flame.

#### *Echoes*

Our very selves are these, that we have sent  
Forth faring in the void of space—but blent  
With backborne laughter of ironic sprites;  
Each in our quick discomfiture delights.

## A MEETING AT THE JUNCTION

Say, boss, I ain't no common tramp,  
Though sure at hikin' I'm a champ!  
Why, say, this very month I've done  
By railroad truck and hoof, if one,  
Two thousand mile—a fairish run—  
An' where I'll be next week God knows!  
The trek bug nips me and I goes.  
Been just like that since, when a child,  
I had a name for being wild.  
Now, take 'em "good" an' take 'em "bad,"  
They're nigh enough alike! My Dad,  
However—he was ironclad,  
Jest sort o' moral muscle bound,  
As you might say—he licked me sound,  
An' plenty often, too; but Jim,  
My younger brother—say, for him  
Wa'n't nothin' good enough! A slim,  
Tall lad he was—Oh, slim an' slight—  
Say! Jest—about—*your* build an' height—  
An' womenfolks'd all declare  
There never was such angel hair;  
It shined like gold; an' then, it curled—  
Oh, he was *too* good for *this* world  
O' sin! At last, got so I must  
Let off some steam, or surely bust.—  
Well! Dad (was on his dyin' bed,  
They told us) called us in an' said  
Some certain things that tickled Jim,  
But made me itch to get at him—  
An' handed me a partin' scotch  
'T slit my well tanned hide. A watch  
He'd worn lifelong was legacy  
For Jim—a partin' prayer for me!  
Well, sir, the two of us no more  
'N got outside that solemn door  
When I felt somethin' give a snap  
Inside o' me.—It wa'n't no scrap,



For I did all the hittin'. Jim,  
 When I got through chastisin' him,  
 Laid on the floor so pale and still  
 'T jest to look give me a chill—  
 I wa'n't no Cain 't meant to kill!  
 Well, I jest simply up an' goed,  
 An' ever sence be'n on the road,  
 Footfree.—The next train east? Well, say—  
 I don't jest know the time o' day,  
 But there's a train that goes that way  
 At 3:15, up through the Notch—  
 My God! Say—*where'd* you get that watch?  
 'Twas give you was it, by your Dad?  
 Then, sonny, *I'm your uncle!* Glad  
 To meet you! Put it there!—Oh, well,  
 Then don't! An' you can *go* to hell,  
 Give my sincere regards to Jim—  
 You certain sure do favor him!

## PRINIUS'S DOG

*One of the casts of the Pompeian dead in the catastrophe of 79 A. D., is of "a watch dog forgotten by his ungrateful master, L. Vesonius Prinius, left tied to a chain behind the street door of the house, overtaken by death while lying on his back with outstretched legs."*

Eighteen hundred years and more,  
 Centuries erelong a score,  
 Have the city overpassed  
 Since Vesuvian ashes cast,  
 And the dust cloud's fateful fall  
 O'er Pompeii's homes the pall—  
 In unceremented graves,  
 Masters cheek by jowl with slaves:  
     In level doom,  
     One death, one tomb.

Eighteen hundred years are flown  
O'er the seared Campanian cone,  
Dropping back, Time's falling rain,  
To their native sea again;  
And again restored to light,  
City long of Dreadful Night,  
Pompeii, resurrected, lies  
Open to the ancient skies:  
    Patrolled by hosts  
    Of hoary ghosts.

Sudden as the lightning's gleam  
Came the belching flame and steam,  
Came the slow relentless weight  
Of the ash rain—gray garbed Fate;  
And the rabble and the rout,  
Silenced midbreath mortal shout,  
Each one where he might be, died:  
How the bodies, scattered wide,  
    Beneath the clay  
    Outspeak today!

Here lies one who as he fell  
Gazed the gaping gates of hell;  
Peaceful features hath his neighbor,  
Fall'n asleep at quiet labor;  
Near, a chiselled Resignation,  
The wife who died at her station;  
And, more featly graven still  
Marvel of Time's telltale skill,  
    Not far from her,  
    The Prinian cur.

Faithful servant, loyal friend,  
Well deserving better end,  
Here his form, preserved in plaster,  
Tells how ingratly his master  
Left him, helpless on his chain.  
Through long centuries have lain  
There his poor distorted bones

Witless witness, he depones:  
    "Thus evil, done,  
    Full course must run."

## HAFIZ

When they would clip the nightingale his wings,  
    Those Hafiz hating Sufis, they were told:  
"So fresh, so sweet the songs that Hafiz sings,  
    They shall be young yet when the world is old!"  
    Zahid is indistinguishable clay—  
    I spent an hour with Hafiz yesterday.

For yesterday the page I read grew dim,  
    And in its place Musella's lyric son,  
As long ago by Ruknabad's bright brim—  
    Again the singing waters live and run,  
    And thrills the bowered bulbul's ecstasy—  
    Drew nigh, to dwell a little while with me.

From his dead day to this of soon-to-die  
    And back again our wordy shuttle went,  
And wove on warp of query and reply  
    Strange web of passing custom and event;  
    With: "Is it true that dead are love and  
        song?"  
    And: "Were they truly in your day so  
        strong?"

Then he: "They say that now men's god is gold,  
    That power is their aim, success their creed."  
Whereto asked I: "Were men so pure of old  
    The love they loved to sing knew naught of  
        greed?"  
    "Methinks," quoth Hafiz, "men are aye the  
        same,  
    And Self their love, whate'er the changing  
        name."

Silent he mused beside the musing stream,  
As one who lives again the crowded past;  
Then frowned, then smiled, as in a dappled dream—  
When angling I essayed a trial cast:  
“Hafiz, what godlike-joyous days were those!”  
And he: “Where now the maid, and where the  
rose?”

“Was then,” I asked, “the maid so very fair?  
The tavern snug? The wine so potent-red?  
The nightingale you made immortal there—  
Was he so music mad as you have said?  
Or would you but, as criticasters hold,  
A theologic parable unfold?”

He gazed at me, unutterably sad,  
Who witlessly had done him grievous wrong:  
“I sang,” said he, “as singeth Ruknabad,  
As all the joyous brotherhood of song—  
And left the preaching to the Sufis sage!”  
Then Hafiz passed—and I resumed the page.

#### EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

Upyearning yet earth anchored as the hills  
Etern was he,  
And musically vocal as the rills’  
Glad minstrelsy.

He stood as straight and steadfast as the trees,  
Yet as the wind  
That stirreth them to wondrous symphonies  
Was unconfined.

He was as buoyant hearted as the flowers,  
Fruitful as fields  
Warm sun and wind have urged, and summer show-  
ers,  
To tenfold yields.

Now he, bold mariner, is gone before  
To "Shadowland;"  
And we, who may not yet that way explore,  
Pause on the strand—  
And, gazing o'er Eternity's wide wave,  
Hear, faint but sure,  
His calm, familiar voice beyond the grave:  
"Dear hearts, endure!"

### A PRESIDENT

We loved him, we lost him—  
And how shall we spare him?  
*Must* loving be losing?  
God knows all the depth of  
The love that we bare him!

We need him, we need him—  
And now he has left us!  
We stand at his graveside  
And blindly we wonder  
Why God has bereft us.

He wrought for his people—  
He loyally wrought for  
His people—his people,  
All blind to their own good  
He sturdily fought for!

One dark day, we cursed him—  
And yet he forgave us!  
How blindly we turned from  
The way *we* had chosen—  
*He* kept it to save us!

We loved him, we lost him—  
Thank God that he knew,  
Ere he passed the dark portal,  
The love that we bore him—  
The love, late but true!

## THE VISITOR

When the brief day darkly dwindles and the lights  
    come twinkling out  
In the hiving hills of commerce reared above the  
    pavement's rout;  
When the workroom is deserted and the clerks are  
    hasting home,  
Oftentimes I linger, dreaming, as the shadows deep-  
    en—roam  
( 'Tis the mind's most boonful magic ) far beyond  
    the crowded ways  
Of the city, down the vista of the backward lying  
    days.

Now with Then is strangely wedded, and the years  
    that lie between  
Are as ghosts that haunt the hallways of old houses,  
    dimly seen  
In the corridors' gray gloaming. So in swift suc-  
    cession flit  
Old familiar forms and faces 'thwart the darkness:  
    born of it;  
Old familiar forms and faces—mazy music, fluting  
    low,  
And the wistful, wondering gaze of one who loved  
    me long ago.

Now the brief day darkly dwindles, and the dreams  
    come swarming up.  
I, who've brothered with gaunt grief and deeply  
    drunk of sorrow's cup  
Linger lone among the shadows far above the stri-  
    dent street—  
Linger lone among the shadows, shadowy visitants  
    to greet.  
Comes a footstep (with no echo) down the dim,  
    deserted hall;  
Comes a tap (*you* could not hear it) at the door—  
    an eager call.

I have found her, my Beloved! It is Grief that lieth  
dead,  
She that liveth, mine forever; and the city there dis-  
pread,  
With its seething population, with its restless tides  
that flow,  
Yon and hither, human currents vainly surging to  
and fro,  
Is a dream not half so real as the vision fair I see  
When the brief day darkly dwindles and the night  
brings Her to me!

### THE EVER GRINDING MILLS

Shower of rain and shower of sun—  
Soul of the soil, awake!  
Walls of the seed cell, break!  
Strongly the generous juices run  
In earth's full veins; each uttermost one,  
Glad in the year's glad morn,  
Stirs with a hope new born—  
Hope that each germinal fibre thrills,  
Passion old as the god of the hills:  
God of the hills, etern,  
See how thy creatures yearn,  
Being but grist for thy grinding mills.

Grist for the mills that grind: from the seed,  
Tiniest seed that lies  
Waiting the warming skies,  
On to the mightiest breathing breed  
Mothered of earth—the wheat and the weed,  
Man and his brother beast,  
Greatest not less than least,  
All to be ground as the Maker wills:  
Tell us, artificer of the hills,  
Are we but, as we seem,  
Parts of a living dream—  
Dream creatures dreaming the grinding mills?

Grist for the mills: if the grist rebel,  
    Bidding the harsh wheel halt;  
    Is it the Miller's fault?  
Giving us mind was cruel?—Ah, well,  
Filling the mind with heaven and hell,  
    Giving the soul a voice,  
    Dressing up fate as choice  
Was perhaps more well meaning than kind:  
What if the will and what if the mind  
    (Will that forthbrought the plan,  
    Mind that it gave to man)  
Were themselves—grist for the mills that grind?

Outstreaming sun and down dropping rain—  
    Spirit of pregnant earth,  
    Praying to give in birth,  
Soon thy baptism of exquisite pain!  
Tremulous, burning pith of the grain,  
    Find in the clod a soul!  
    Seek, O my heart, thy goal—  
Courage! Look up, look up to the hills!  
Conviction comes, and God! how it thrills:  
    Incomplete were the scheme  
    And imperfect the dream  
Save for the grist that feedeth the mills.



## THE HERMIT

My pallet to the cave's low portal bear,  
And leave me, comrades, for a little there—  
Once more to view, ere these limp lids are furled,  
The passing panorama of the world.

Oh, prospect wondrous fair! Look ye where wide—  
With glebe and greening garth diversified:  
Broad bosomed, commerce crested waterways;  
Gray cities, ganglia of trade, ablaze  
With fiery forges, grimed with toil; the whole  
In one arterial, palpitating soul  
Conjunct by woven highway, God's and man's,  
Dense-populous with questing caravans—  
Arenalike extends the far flung plain  
That moves to meet the marvel of the main,  
As this again is mystic merged in sky—  
Earth, sea and cloud, one sisterhood; and I

Myself akin (one kind) with each; with earth,  
In solid substance and in body-birth;  
With sea, in thoughts as restless and more wide  
Than sweeps the waste domain of wind and tide;  
And with the sky, in that unsubstanced part  
That soon shall have its Here out There.

Oh, heart

Of Man, that loves and hopes, and fears—for so  
We are as gods—the little gods that know,  
But cannot shape and animate and rule,  
As doth the Universal Will: Thy school  
Hath taught me wisdom (of a sort). Love came,  
And the Beloved died! Grief; toil; wealth; fame:  
So ran the brutal sequence. In the mart  
I played high stakes, and won; and no small part  
In judgment hall and council chamber bore,  
Nor got a mean repute when wanton War  
Obscenely held the stage.

And now—for these?  
No worn night watcher ere myself who sees  
The sun surmount the calm world's redd'ning rim,  
As I am last to see his glory dim,  
Day done. At morn and eve at prayer I get,  
Muezzin of this mountain minaret,  
The virgin ear of God. At mid of night,  
With sibillation of soft wings in flight,  
I hear the homeless hosts of bygone days'  
Unresting sprites flit through the starry ways;  
Close consequent upon their Lost Platoon,  
Oft, when at vigil with the wakeful moon,  
I've heard the passage through the pregnant airs  
Of souls homegoing, and good women's prayers.

The sun has set. Come, comrades, let us go—  
A-wearied of the all too brilliant show!  
Bear me within, to wait without a fear  
The mingling of the raindrop with the mere!











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